

SCHOOL BUS PROGRAM



Education and Training

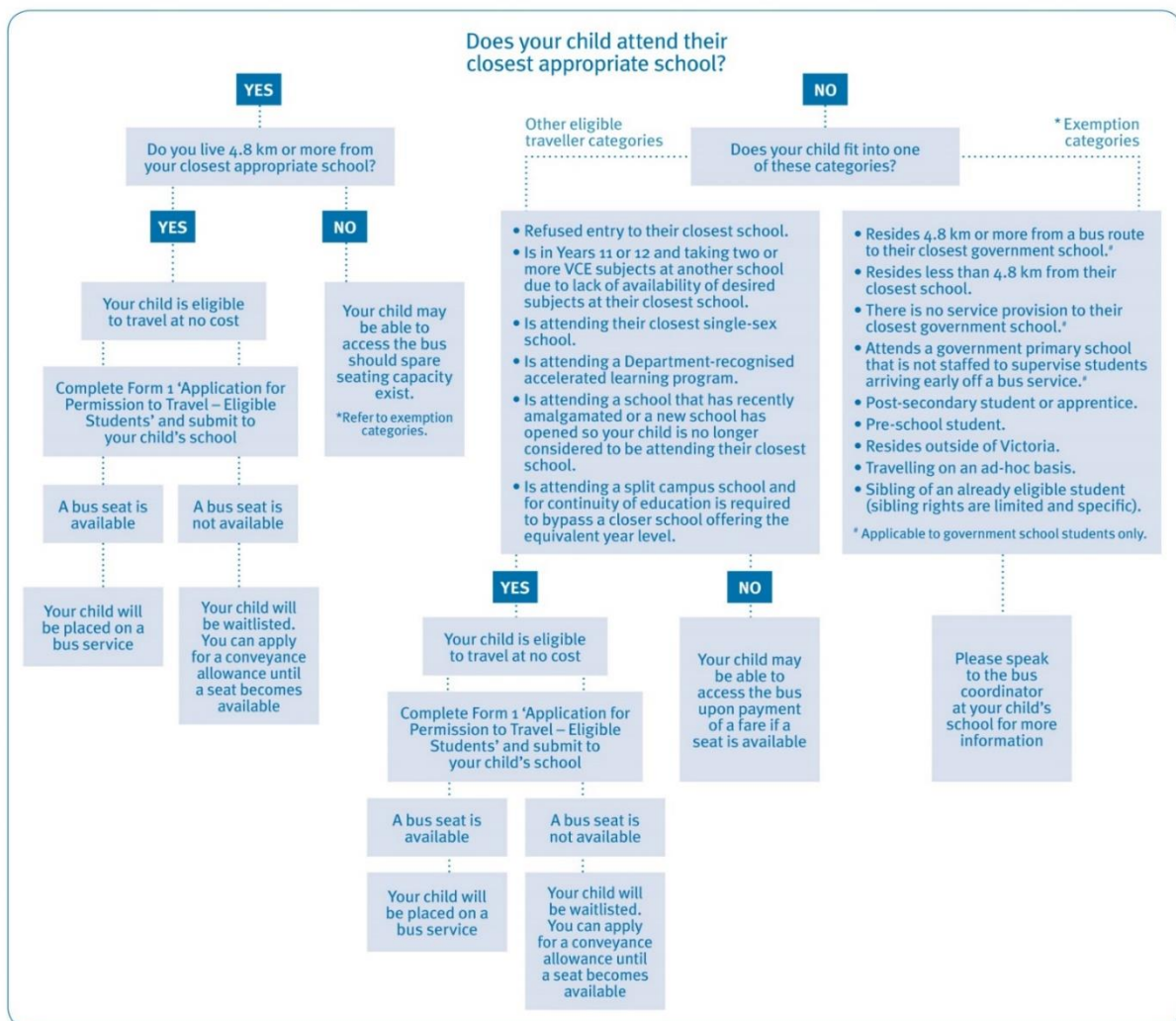


School Bus Program – Eligibility guide for families

- The following information will help explain the School Bus Program and assist you in determining your child’s eligibility to travel on a school bus.
- While parents/guardians are primarily responsible for getting their children to and from school, the School Bus Program assists families in rural and regional Victoria by transporting students to school.
- The School Bus Program services both government and non-government schools.
- Categories of eligibility determine whether a student travels at no cost or travels upon the payment of a fare.
- Students wishing to access a seat on a bus must complete an application form and parents/guardians must agree to the conditions of travel including, if applicable, the payment of a fare.

Public Transport Victoria (PTV) administers the School Bus Program as directed by the policy. The Student Transport Unit of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) sets the policy and provides general transport advice to regional offices and schools. To be eligible for a seat on a bus at no cost a student must:

1. Attend their closest government school or closest appropriate non-government school, which is determined by the denomination of the school
2. Reside 4.8 km or more from the school
3. Reside in Victoria.



Students are expected to access public transport if it is within 1.6 km of their home or closer than their nearest school bus service.

NOTES REGARDING SCHOOL BUS PROGRAM



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Closest government school or closest appropriate non-government school

- To be eligible for travel on a school bus at no cost, government students must attend their closest school while non-government students must attend their closest appropriate school, which is determined by the denomination of the school.
- Students not attending their closest school may be accommodated on a bus service as long as they pay a fare and seating capacity exists.
- Students must reside 4.8 km or more from the school. The distance is measured by the shortest practicable route from the student's front gate to the school's main entrance.

Non-government school students

- Eligible government students have priority over eligible non-government students when being accommodated on services.
- Non-government students may be accommodated where capacity exists.
- Non-government students on their own do not form a case for the establishment of a new school bus service or an extension to a route.

Exemptions

- The policy has some exemptions where a student may be granted access to a bus service at no cost. These exemptions are limited and specific.
- Exemptions are not granted on the basis of financial hardship.

Fare paying

- Government and non-government students not attending their closest appropriate school are required to pay a fare as set by PTV.
- A fare paying student may be required to relinquish their seat if the service is at capacity and an eligible non-fare paying student (government and nongovernment) wishes to access the service. The status of fare paying students is assessed each term.
- Parents/guardians must agree in writing that their child will travel as long as they pay a fare and seating capacity exists.
- Parents/guardians agree to make alternative travel arrangements should their child be required to relinquish their seat.
- Fare paying students do not form a case for service retention.

Conditions of travel and parental responsibilities

- Students and parents/guardians must agree to comply with the conditions of bus travel as stated on the back of all School Bus Program travel application forms.
- Parents/guardians understand that school bus travel is a privilege and not a right.

Special cases

- Families may apply for special consideration in complex and challenging transport circumstances (not including financial hardship). An application for special case consideration can be made through the school and requires DEECD regional endorsement and any documentation that supports the case.
- Speak to your school's bus coordinator for further information on special case consideration.

Emergency management

- In a forecast emergency school bus services will be cancelled if any part of the route is deemed at risk.
- A rapid onset emergency may result in service cancellations and buses being held at the school or if in transit, the buses returning to the school.
- Parents/guardians should familiarise themselves with the school's school bus emergency management plans.

Further information

Go to www.education.vic.gov.au/travellingtoschool for travel application forms and the School Bus Program's policy and procedures.

For further assistance with your application, please contact the bus coordinator at the school your child will be attending.

To ensure the safety of all passengers on school buses, the following conditions apply at all times.

To ensure safe travel on school buses, students must agree to the following:

- Not to play on the road at the bus stop or try to get on the bus before it has stopped.
- Make sure you and your belongings are inside the bus at all times.
- Not throw anything from a bus window or have anything hanging out a window.
- Place bags and other belongings in the allocated storage areas.
- Get on and off the bus quietly and in an orderly manner.
- Stay in your seat while the bus is moving.
- Not distract drivers with screaming, shouting or unruly behaviour.
- When you get off the bus only cross the road when the bus has left and it is safe to do so.
- No dangerous or flammable goods are allowed on the bus, for example aerosol cans.
- Travel on the bus service allocated to you, to and from your approved bus stop only. Do not change to one that will take you to a sports or social event.
- Wear a seat belt where fitted.



To ensure students are considerate to one another and their bus driver, they must agree to:

- In the morning, arrive at the bus stop 10 minutes prior to departure.
- Not eat, drink or smoke while on the school bus.
- In the morning, let the school and driver know if you will not be travelling home on the bus that day.
- Use a standard conversational tone and not use offensive language or call out to others on board or to passing traffic or people.
- Listen to the bus driver and bus captain. They are responsible for maintaining school bus safety and also have the authority to report any vandalism or misbehaviour including but not limited to bullying, teasing, or aggression.
- Leave your bike in a safe and secure place if riding to the bus stop. Public Transport Victoria and the Department of Education and Training are unable to accept responsibility for the safety of your bike.
- Behaving inappropriately on a school bus places the safety and wellbeing of all on board at risk.

Non-compliance with any of the above conditions may result in the following:

- The driver will stop the bus.
- The student's name and full details of the breach will be recorded.
- The student will be transported to school or to their normal drop off.
- The breach will be reported to the coordinating principal.
- The coordinating principal will take disciplinary measures in accordance with the guidelines below.
- In rare and exceptional circumstances, and only as a last resort, drivers are authorised to eject passengers from a bus.

Following the report of a relevant incident, the coordinating principal may take the disciplinary action below:

- First offence – verbal warning to student.
- Second offence – written warning to parent/guardian.
- Third offence – one week suspension of student from school bus travel.
- Fourth offence – the student will not be allowed to travel on the school bus for the remainder of the year.

A serious offence that endangers other students, bus staff or property will result in immediate suspension.

Responsibilities of parents/guardians

- Parents/guardians are responsible for transporting their children to and from authorised bus stops and their safety at the bus stop while waiting for the bus.
- Supervision is not provided at roadside stops. Parents/guardians are responsible for their children upon disembarking the afternoon service.
- Parents waiting for bus passengers at a roadside bus stop should wait on the same side of the road as the bus to prevent accidents.
- School bus travel is a privilege and not a right and consequences will follow a breach of these conditions.
- It is understood that bus travel is provided and accepted on these conditions.

Form 2: Application for Permission to Travel – Fare Paying Students



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Year		Term		PLEASE ENSURE ALL PAGES ARE COMPLETED AND SIGNED
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APPLICANT DETAILS

RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Unit #		Street #		Address	
Town/Suburb				State	
				Postcode	
Exact distance (in km) by the shortest practicable route			Home to school	km	Home to bus stop
				km	

POSTAL ADDRESS

Unit/Street/PO Box No.		Postal Address	
Town/Suburb		State	
		Postcode	

PARENT/GUARDIAN DETAILS

First Name		Surname		Telephone	
First Name		Surname		Telephone	
Email					
Emergency contacts	1	Relationship		Telephone	
	2	Relationship		Telephone	

TRAVELLER DETAILS

Student one

First Name		Surname		Date of birth	
Travel start date		School enrolled		Year level at time of travel	

Any medical problems or requirements the driver should be notified of? If yes, please provide details.

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Which days do you intend to use this service? (please use X to highlight)

MON	<input type="checkbox"/>	TUE	<input type="checkbox"/>	WED	<input type="checkbox"/>	THU	<input type="checkbox"/>	FRI	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Student two

First Name		Surname		Date of birth	
Travel start date		School enrolled		Year level at time of travel	

Any medical problems or requirements the driver should be notified of? If yes, please provide details.

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Which days do you intend to use this service? (please use X to highlight)

MON	<input type="checkbox"/>	TUE	<input type="checkbox"/>	WED	<input type="checkbox"/>	THU	<input type="checkbox"/>	FRI	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Student three

First Name		Surname		Date of birth	
Travel start date		School enrolled		Year level at time of travel	

Any medical problems or requirements the driver should be notified of? If yes, please provide details.

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Which days do you intend to use this service? (please use X to highlight)

MON	<input type="checkbox"/>	TUE	<input type="checkbox"/>	WED	<input type="checkbox"/>	THU	<input type="checkbox"/>	FRI	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Form 2: Application for Permission to Travel Fare Paying Students



OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Form Submitted		Received by			
Date Form completed		Parent/Guardian signed - Y/N?		Eligibility assessed - Y/N?	
Waitlisted - Y/N?		Student(s) signed - Y/N?		Application (s) Approved/Declined	
Student is listed as ineligible and is required to pay a fare prior to travel approval – detail the fare Amount e.g. \$120 per term, \$480 per year					
Student one					
Student two					
Student three					
Fare Payment required –Y/N?		Has Parent/Guardian been invoiced Y/N?		Date	
Fares collected – Y/N?		Has Parent been notified in writing of travel status Y/N?		Date	

BUS SERVICE DETAILS

AM Bus Service (s)					
Bus route allocated		Bus operator			
Interchange details -if req.		Bus operator			
Pick-up bus stop location		Pick up time			
Drop off bus stop location		Drop off time			
Seat number allocated		Bus roll updated			
Comments:					
PM Bus Service (s)					
Bus route allocated		Bus operator			
Interchange details -if req.		Bus operator			
Pick-up bus stop location		Pick up time			
Drop off bus stop location		Drop off time			
Seat number allocated		Bus roll updated			
Comments:					

OFFICE USE ONLY

IMPORTANT:

- When advising Parents/Guardians that a fare payment is required, it is important to communicate the full fare amount and the fare payable due date prior to advising that travel is approved.
- Parents/Guardians must be advised that travel cannot be approved until fare payment (term by term) is made.
- Please ensure that all fares collected are recorded on the fares acquittal template, available on the Department's website.

School Bus Coordinator Name (please print): _____

School Signature – Coordinating Principal / Delegate signature: _____

Date _____

Form 2: Application for Permission to Travel Fare Paying Students



PARENT/GUARDIAN TO COMPLETE: I certify that:

- All the above details are true and correct.
- I will notify the principal in writing within 7 days of any change of address or school.
- I agree to pay the costs of repairs or damage to the bus, or its replacement if totally destroyed, caused by the vandalism or deliberate act of my child(ren).
- I consent to release this information to Public Transport Victoria (PTV) to assist with planning for transport services.

I agree to pay a term fare (determined by PTV) of \$ _____ in advance of travel.

The fare is payable for each child per term. The total payment per term for _____ child(ren) is \$ _____

I understand that my child(ren)'s permission to travel on the school bus service is subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. My child(ren) may only travel where seating is available on the service after all students with prior rights have been accommodated.
2. I will make alternative arrangements if seating becomes insufficient after students with prior rights to travel are accommodated.
3. My child(ren)'s continued access to the bus service will be subject to review at the end of each term.
4. My child(ren) may not form a case or part of a case for the retention, extension or addition of services, or a route or timetable alteration, or the provision of a larger vehicle.
5. Curriculum preference does not guarantee my child(ren) continued access to the school bus service.

I acknowledge the decision about whether my child(ren) can travel on the school bus service is at the discretion of the coordinating principal and may be reviewed at any time in accordance with these terms and conditions.

I accept the authority of the coordinating principal with regard to student discipline on the school bus service.
I agree to abide by the Conditions of Travel.

I understand that if I or my child(ren) do not comply with the Conditions of Travel, it may result in my child(ren) not being permitted to travel on the school bus service.

Parent/guardian name (please print) _____

Parent/guardian signature _____

Date _____

STUDENT (s) TO COMPLETE:

- I accept the authority of the coordinating principal with regard to student discipline on the school bus service.
- I agree to abide by the above Conditions of Travel

Student	Student one	Student two
Print Name		
Signature		
Date		